(c) Based on comprehensive database, past experiences in Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R&R) in other project and liberalized R and R policy, the Government of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra had prepared their individual Action Plans in early 1993 which were later revised in 1995. The Master Plan includes village-wise, category-wise PAFs and their preference in R and R to resettle in home state or in Gujarat. As per 1995 Master Plan the total Project Affected Families (PAFs) had increased from 30144 to 4072" The number of PAFs have further increased to 40827 due to addition of 100 more genuine PAFs in Maharashtra recently. In compliance to the decision of Review Committee of (Narmada Control Authority) NCA in 1996 the R and R Sub-Group of NCA is reviewing the R and R measures at every 5m height of the dam and the Action Plan for Resettlement and Rehabilitation for balance families upto a dam height of EL 90.0m, has been finalized for implementation by the States. The rehabilitation work is being taken up pari-passu with the progress of raising the height of the Sardar Sarovar Dam, which is subjudice in the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

Consensus on National Water Policy

1860. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Water Resources Council (NWRC) could not adopt the new National Water Policy because of lack of consensus among the States; and

(b) if so, what are the salient features of the new revised National Water Policy and what are those issues on which there were disagreement among the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Draft Revised National Water Policy, among others, provides for:—

(1) Laying greater emphasis on the improvement of the performance of the existing water resources facilities.

(2) Formulation of guidelines for water allocation amongst the basin States keeping in view the national perspective on the water resources availability.

(3) Review and amendment of the Inter-State Water Disputes Act of 1956 for timely adjudication for Water Dispute referred to the Tribunal.

(4) Establishment of appropriate river Basin Organisations with statutory powers for the planning, development and management for a river basin as a whole or sub-basins, where necessary.

(5) Development of a standardized national information system for promoting free exchange of data among the various agencies through a suitable legislation.

(6) Formulation of a national policy on resettlement and rehabilitation so that the proiect-affected persons share the benefits through proper rehabilitation.

(7) Enactment of a dam safety legislation to ensure proper inspection maintenance and surveillance of existing dams.

(8) Ensuring institutional arrangements for maintenance of water resources schemes and involving Water Users Associations in the operation, maintenance and the management of water infrastructures.

(9) Fixing of Water charges for various uses in such a way that they cover at least the operation and maintenance costs with well targeted subsidy.

(10) Maintaining minimum flows in the perennial strems and treatment of effluents to acceptable levels and standards before discharging into rivers for maintaining ecology.

(11) Encouraging Non-conventional methods for utilisation of water such as through inter-basin transfers, artificial recharge of ground water, desalination of brackish or seawater, rain water harvesting and watershed management.

The 4th meeting of the National Water Resources Council under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister was held on 7th July, 2000 for the adoption of revised National Water Policy. During the meeting, the deliberations established a broad consensus among the states on most of the issues contained in the proposed policy. However, some of the areas of differences were as under:—

(1) Formulation of guidelines for water allocation amongst States.

(2) Amendment of Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956.

(3) Establishing appropriate river Basin Organisation with statutory powers.

(4) Legislation for developing standardized national information system.

In order to achieve greater convergence and agreement on these issues, the Council decided for the constitution of Working group including Ministers of all the States/UTs chaired by Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources.